

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE 37

THE WASHINGTON POST
3 May 1980

AROUND THE WORLD

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Soviet Agent Defects

LONDON—Britain has given political asylum to a Soviet KGB intelligence officer who worked under cover for the Tass news agency and the World Health Organization in Geneva, government sources said.

The sources identified him as Ilya Grigorievich Dzhirkvelov, 53, and said he defected to the West with his wife and 5-year-old daughter last month. The reasons for Dzhirkvelov's defection were unclear, but one published report in the British press said he had already been providing British intelligence with extensive information on Soviet espionage.

The Foreign Office would confirm only that Home Secretary William Whitelaw had granted a defector's request to stay in Britain.

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